



Arlington Disability Commission Minutes

Date: Wednesday, March 15, 2023

Time: 4:00pm

Location: Conducted by Hybrid Participation

Attendees: Paul Parravano, Paul Raia, Grace Carpenter, Kerrie Fallon, Ileana Gatica, Michael Rademacher,

Guests: Tim Ross, Jillian Harvey, Janice Cagan-Teuber, Lew Valentini, Sarah Forrester

Absent: Cynthia DeAngelis

Agenda

1. Call to Order, Read Ground Rules, Welcome (5 min)
 - a.
2. Ground rules (2 min)
 - a. [Please don't use Zoom chat/messaging during the meeting, unless that is your primary way to participate in a meeting. The co-chairs have disabilities that make it hard to deal with Zoom chat/messaging]
3. Approve Draft February Meeting Minutes (2 min)
 - a. Raia approved, Carpenter seconded
4. Variance Request – Highrock Church (10 min)
 - a. Lew is the Facilities Manager, joined staff in July of 2022. Mission of hospitality and solidarity is to be fully accessible. 735 Mass Ave building is historic, built in 1941, have had a chairlift operating and functioning in the space for years. An initial variance for this lift was applied for in 2022. Amendment to docket V22-046. The final interior fixture for the lift will be installed once they have approval on the variance. Due to the age of the building, they have to have a manual approach chairlift. They have electrical buttons to call the lift. 3 entrances, one in sanctuary (open space), access from outside on sidewalk, access from downstairs. There is a low overhead condition on the door to the outside. Typically there would be an automatic door opener with an arm that would open and control the slow closing of the door. Given the low overhead of the door there is no room for the installation of an electric arm opener. There is a 6 in by 6 in by 10 foot load bearing beam preventing a 6 inches from the door to the control, it is 9.5 inches with the beam.
 - b. Rademacher asked if there may be a hardship caused by the 9.5 inches. Lew stated he can't think of any concerns. It doesn't limit ability to control or access the lift. If someone were using the door frame as leverage to open the door, they would have 3.5 more inches to grab. Lew also stated the door is always staffed when open so there will always be people there to assist if necessary.
 - c. Parravano stated he doesn't think it will be too challenging, visitors will be

familiar with the set up and will learn to adapt.

- d. Raia asked if you can fit a person in a wheelchair and an abled bodied person in the lift at the same time. Lew stated both could fit.
- e. Carpenter asked if a person would be able to use the lift one handed. Lew stated you could.
- f. Ellen Leigh asked if the increase in depth may cause issues for someone in a wheelchair having to reach the extra 3.5inches. Asked if Lew has received feedback from ARB yet. Lew stated they have not received anything yet.
- g. Gatica restated concern for wheelchair users. Lew stated the code is slated to be changed to 8 inches instead of 6, which would make this only 1.5 inches over the code. Greeters would always be available to open the door once the lift arrives.
- h. Raia motions to vote on the variance with the church, Parravano seconds. Unanimous approval.
- i. Cagan-Tuber asked if there are assisted listening devices, Lew will follow up.

5. Public informal chats (5 min)

- a. Carpenter asked if folks were interested in having informal chats set up on a semi-regular basis for folks to meet and discuss other issues.
- b. Gatica noted it might be a good idea to link up with the schools.
- c. Rebecca Gruber stated the schools hold weekly chats, we could partner with them to use a week to highlight disabilities.

6. Resources & Connections Fair (5 min)

- a. Teresa, along with the DEI division, have been coordinating with HCA, ArlingtonEats, Libby from AYCC, to have a Resources & Connections Fair. This will be held in Town Hall on April. The idea is that residents may not be aware of all the social services the Town offers, and to bring these all together.
- b. Teresa asked if the commission would like to co-sponsor the event. Asked for funding for reservation of the space and light refreshments.
- c. Raia stated the automatic door opener to Town Hall doesn't always work and that Town Hall doesn't meet all ADA requirements. Teresa stated the idea was to hold this event in an obvious, centralized location. Greeters will be at entrances to guide folks.
- d. Carpenter expressed concern if folks coming on COA van will be able to access Town Hall.

7. Town Day (5 min)

- a. Carpenter stated we did not have a booth at Town Day last year. Thinks someone should be in charge to lead planning. By May we should decide on what we'd like to have at the booth.
- b. Raia stated we need to have something to drive traffic to our booth. One year there was a child who won a national braille reading competition to explain how braille works. Would also like to see "swag" to be able to give out to visitors.
- c. Rebecca Gruber stated Town Day is scheduled for September 23rd.
- d. Cagan-Teuber stated we have brochures used at the Farmer's Market that we can revamp and use.

8. CPAC (5 min)

- a. Kari's background is in social work and public health. Now she works for state government. Has been an Arlington resident for 17 years and has focused a lot of her work for accessibility and social justice. Kari also has a lot of experience with data analysis which is something CPAC is seeking in a

- nominee.
- b. Raia wondering if APD has participated in Alzheimer's training, Kari will inquire.
- c. Carpenter motion to call a vote to nominate Kari, Raia seconded. Unanimous approval.
- 9. Budget presentation (10 min)
 - a. Tabled for next month
- 10. Grant Updates (5 min)
 - a.
- 11. Commissioner Recruitment Updates (5 min)
 - a. Tim is to schedule interviews with Janice Cagan-Teuber and Kari Sasportas.
- 12. Arlington Reads Together (5 min)
 - a. Our event is tomorrow
- 13. Correspondences (5 min)
 - a. We received a voicemail from someone requesting support for their disabled friend gaining employment.
 - i. MassRehab
 - ii. Work Without Limits
 - iii. Jewish Vocational Services
 - iv. Triangle Inc.
- 14. MERGE Consulting (10 min)
 - a. Sarah was hoping we could use MERGE to hold an event in Arlington. NE/Metro Boston region group that meets to talk about inclusion opportunities. Pathways for Friendships is funding a regional inclusion event in either Lexington or JCC in Newton. No cost for the commission to participate. The event will highlight recreation programs, sports teams, after school programs, and how to include kids with disabilities. Instead of hosting an event in Arlington, Sarah was hoping we could promote the regional event.
- 15. Subcommittee reports (10 min)
 - a. DEI
 - b. DPW
 - i. Tonight there is a public meeting for the Mass Ave/Appleton intersection. Significant changes are being proposed.
 - ii. Cagan-Teuber stated we should have an online database of barriers throughout Town.
 - c. Remote Meeting Study Committee
 - i. Cagan-Teuber asked for more folks to fill out the survey. They are in the process of finalizing the report.
 - d. Recreation
 - i. Robbins Farm public input 3rd meeting scheduled for 3/16.
- 16. Public Comment (10 min)
- 17. Next meeting Wednesday April 19, 2023 at 4PM
 - a. Rademacher motioned,
- 18. Closing

Commission members not able to attend please email dei@town.arlington.ma.us prior to the scheduled meeting.

Anyone needing accessibility information or other assistance in order to attend this meeting should contact dei@town.arlington.ma.us. This meeting is open to all interested individuals.